

**CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

Monday, July 14, 2003  
Department of Human Services  
120 North 200 West, Room 129  
1:00 P.M.

**Present**

Bruce Bilodeau  
Mark Brasher  
Helen Christian, Co-Chair  
Jessie Fan  
Judge Joseph Fratto  
Thomas Maloney  
DiAnna McDowell  
Millie Peterson  
Stewart Ralphs, Co-Chair  
Vanessa Thompson, Staff to the Committee

**Excused**

Jan Day  
David Salazar

**Guests**

Robin Arnold-Williams, Executive Director, Department of Human Services  
Emma Chacon, Director, Office of Recovery Services  
James Kidder, Office of Recovery Services

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**Welcome & Introduction**

Helen Christian, Co-Chair, welcomed the committee and guests to the meeting.

Mark Brasher, moved to approve the meeting minutes from the July 1, 2002 meeting. Jessie Fan seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Robin Arnold-Williams, Executive Director, Department of Human Services, explained that the Department has agreed to videotape Child Support Guidelines Advisory Committee meetings and make copies available. She further stated that the court's ruling did not find the committee in violation of the Open and Public Meetings Act in 2002.

**Orientation for New Committee Members**

Emma Chacon, Director of the Office of Recovery Services, provided the committee with an overview of the history and role of ORS, child support collection in Utah, federal provisions of child support and the Utah guidelines in general.

Robin Arnold-Williams explained the role and scope of responsibility of the Child Support Guidelines Advisory Committee. The committee's report is statutorily due by October 1, 2003 to the Judiciary Interim Committee. For any adjustment to the guidelines, the legislature will have to pass legislation during the 2004 General Session.

The committee briefly discussed the presentation it will make to the Judiciary Interim Committee in the fall and the general timeline for completion of the committee's report.

### **Discussion of PSI Report**

Vanessa Thompson, staff to the committee, indicated that Dr. Jane Venohr from Policy Studies, Inc. (PSI), is willing to present the final report to the committee at the August meeting.

Helen Christian explained the reasons behind the development of the PSI report and where the committee left off last summer. Since the committee has not met for over a year, she indicated that there is not a lot of time to reevaluate all of the issues that might be raised.

Judge Fratto stated that the committee needs to decide what issues it wants to address in its report to the legislature before more time elapses.

Millie Peterson indicated that she is interested in actions the previous committee took with regard to issues to be considered in the final committee report.

DiAnna McDowell referred to legislation considered during the last session that would require the committee use Utah-specific data. Robin Arnold-Williams explained that such legislation would likely be passed in the future and money for that study would have to be built into the department's budget. Jessie Fan indicated that such a study could likely be very costly.

Montana is currently revising its guidelines using state-specific data and Robin expressed that the Department is continuing to follow Montana's progress and will provide an update.

Stewart pointed out that the previous committee focused on the guideline tables, medical expenses, tax exemptions and child-care costs. He thought that other possible issues might include transportation and reductions in obligation for extended parent-time.

Robin mentioned potential 2004 legislation concerning child-care costs for children receiving public assistance.

The committee discussed the PSI proposals that incorporate \$250 for medical expenses per year, per child. Helen mentioned that the committee voted to accept the \$250 incorporation last July. Robin reminded the committee that they are not obligated to agree on all issues and solely one proposal and that it is possible to present a majority report and a minority report to the legislature.

Thomas Maloney moved that the committee prioritize the following issues for committee recommendations:

1. Child Support Guideline Tables (including low-income adjustments);
2. distribution of Medical Costs;
3. distribution of Child-Care Costs; and
4. tax exemptions.

Other elements of the guidelines will be discussed when those items are complete. Mark Brasher seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Millie Peterson reiterated that the current committee should have the opportunity to discuss items that have been previously voted on.

Judge Fratto suggested that the committee set its agenda as quickly as possible. The committee decided that it would invite Dr. Venohr to present in August. In order to prepare for the presentation, the committee agreed that it would be helpful to have specific questions for Dr. Venohr. These questions should be sent to Vanessa Thompson and distributed both to the committee and Dr. Venohr.

The committee discussed possibilities for statewide public input regarding the proposals in September. Millie suggested posting the PSI report on the web soon in order to make it available to the public. Bruce Bilodeau suggested pointing out key issues in the report in a brief synopsis.

### **Other Business**

The committee discussed the agenda for its next meeting and agreed the meeting would be held on August 1, 2003 at noon to discuss medical expenses, child-care expenses and tax exemptions. Vanessa Thompson agreed to contact Robert Turner at the Courts for an update on guideline deviations for the August 1 meeting. Dr. Venohr's presentation will be on August 8, 2003 at noon.

Millie Peterson moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 3:30.